

Stress Busting 101

Written by Dr. Deborah Sandella | Monday, 11 October 2010 00:00



Did you know you already own the best stress zapper in the world! It's with you no matter where you are and what you're doing. Even when you're impatiently standing in a long line at the store or after you find out you didn't get the job or when you're angry with your partner or your kids or your roommate. It's right there... inside you.

It's your breath. Everyone knows how to breathe. In fact, you are inherently good at it. You are constructed perfectly to employ your breath to dissolve anxiety and doubt and fear at a moment's notice. Pretty Cool, huh!

Right now, take a deep cleansing breath, inhaling through your nose and exhaling out your mouth. As you let your breath release, gently allow your shoulders to settle toward the floor as you imagine tension easily sliding off and being absorbed by the earth. How's that for feeling more relaxed in an instant.

Now, gently let your attention shift to your navel and pretend you are breathing in through the front of your bellybutton and out through the small of your back. I know it sounds silly, yet your imagination allows you to do many creative things. When you breathe through your bellybutton, you naturally bring your full attention back into your physical body. Notice the shift in perspective as you try it.

When we're afraid or anxious, our attention naturally shifts to the worried thoughts in our head, "Oh no, what will I do now... this can't work... I can't make it... I'm not good enough..." and before we know it, we're "out of body" ... preoccupied... not present... unaware. In other words, we become disconnected from our bodies, our honest thoughts and our genuine feelings because the rumination of fear is taking up all the working memory in our brains. We are trapped in a circular chain of figuring out how to negotiate a way to "not feel" the feelings we're already feeling and not liking.

Your breath, however, can bring you back to center at any moment... thus ejecting you from the cycle of criticism and analysis of the left brain and effortlessly shifting you into your creative,

intuitive right brain where inherent feelings of peace and wholeness reside. It's not quite that simplistic, yet you get the idea.

Merely by becoming present in your body, your emotional resources become available again. You are alive and in a body and your feelings even those you dislike and wish to avoid can be welcomed because they are just transient states of awareness; they are not you! They will pass. Wow! That's good news.

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